

High School Lesson 1

Civic Duty: Defining American Citizenship

Materials needed

**Indicates materials included at the end of the lesson.*

- For the teacher:
 - Survey (Limitations on Government)*
 - “*Proceedings of the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana on the Announcement of the Death of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States.*”*
 - Quote #1 Answer Key*
 - LCD or overhead projector
 - Large poster paper
 - “Dot” stickers (several colors)
- For the students:
 - Survey (Limitations on Government)*
 - “*Proceedings of the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana on the Announcement of the Death of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States.*”*
 - Vocabulary Worksheet*
 - Quote #1*
 - Pen, pencil, paper

Pre-Activity

- In groups, have students complete the Survey (Limitations on Government)* on the limitations of government. Discuss their responses.
- Using “dot” stickers and large poster paper with the survey questions listed, have a representative from each group record their group’s answers to the survey questions on the poster paper (a dot should be placed under the corresponding survey answer number for each question). Provide different color dots for each group.
- When completed, the poster provides a visual representation of where the groups agree and where they disagree about the survey questions.

Ask students to point out areas of agreement and where the groups disagreed. Choose specific groups to defend/explain their positions for specific questions. Students should try to convince each other why their positions make the most sense. The instructor’s role is to help students express their positions as clearly and logically as possible, avoiding ad hominem and irrational arguments. [The small group activity focuses on these terms.]

Collect and save all student work. The student surveys can be utilized in each of the subsequent lessons in this unit, if you so choose.

Introductory Questions for Discussion

Write the following questions on board or display on an overhead.

1. In what ways does democratic government guarantee personal freedoms at the same time it creates personal responsibility for citizens? What are some of the responsibilities associated with American citizenship?

2. Can democracy survive with uninvolved and/or uninformed citizens? Explain.

Have a student read each one aloud. Use Accountable Talk Technique as described at end of unit to facilitate meaningful discussion.

Read and Discuss “Proceedings of the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana on the Announcement of the Death of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States.”*

Pass out and read “*The Proceedings...*”^{*} Summarize the purpose of the handout for the students. *The Indiana Supreme Court like other groups around the nation wanted to memorialize the death of Abraham Lincoln and praise him for his service to his country.* Have the students search the document for the traits and qualities of Lincoln that were memorialized in this historical record by circling the character traits (or virtues) listed on the board or overhead. Explain why these traits are important to good citizenship.

Small Group Activity (2 to 4 students)

- Divide the class into small groups.
- Pass out the Lesson 1 Vocabulary Worksheet* and the Lesson 1 Quote.* *Give students ten to fifteen minutes to complete the activities in their groups.*
- Have each group choose a spokesperson to share the Vocabulary Worksheet* answers with the class. *Depending on time constraints, you may have each group share one answer, a few answers, or all answers (just be certain that every group shares something). Then discuss the Lincoln quote and each groups’ responses to the questions.*

Exit Activity: Quick Write

Have students divide a sheet of paper in half and label one half “Responsibilities” and the other half “Rights.” Students should list as many rights and responsibilities of citizenship that they can think of, then number them to rank by importance.

Extending the Lesson

A Civic Dilemma: Lincoln and the Civil War

► Distribute and read Fact Sheet #1, * then go over the following questions.

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you think that the Southern states had a legitimate right to secede from the Union?
2. Were citizens who claimed loyalty to the Confederacy guilty of treason?
3. Do you think that some Northerners moved to the South because they did not agree with Lincoln?
4. Why do you think preserving the Union was so important to Lincoln? In retrospect, do you think he did the right thing?
5. Citizens are often called on to make sacrifices for the good of their country. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the Civil War made the ultimate sacrifice. What sorts of sacrifices do modern American citizens make for the good of their government?